



James Roland Craig

February 16, 1940 - December 23, 2022

James R. “Jim” Craig of Blacksburg VA passed away on Friday, December 23 after a long battle with Parkinson’s Disease.

He was born February 16, 1940, in Philadelphia to Harry R. and Evelyn M. Craig. He was preceded in death by his parents, as well as a sister-in-law, Candy Craig and a niece, Candace Craig. He is survived by his high school sweetheart and wife of 60 years, Lois Watson Craig; his daughter, Nancie Willett (Charles Stoll) of Mt. Pleasant SC and son, James M. Craig (Donna Mabry) of Christiansburg VA; and four grandchildren: Daniel Willett, Samuel Willett, Jessica Craig and Thomas Willett. He is also survived by two brothers: Harry R. Craig Jr., (Barbara) and Douglas M. Craig; nephews David Craig (Kelly) and Martin Craig, and a niece, Joy Craig.

He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a BS degree, and from Lehigh University with MS and PhD degrees, all in geological sciences, and completed a post-doctoral fellowship at The Carnegie Institution of Washington.

His career as a university professor and research scientist spanned 35 years. He was designated a Professor Emeritus of Economic Geology following his retirement from Virginia Tech in 2002. In addition to teaching and research, he had served as the Head of Department for the Department of Geosciences at Virginia Tech and as chairman of the Virginia Waste Management Board. He authored numerous professional articles, and both graduate and undergraduate level textbooks. He earned numerous awards for teaching, including the Sporn Award for Teaching Excellence, membership in Virginia Tech’s Academy of Teaching Excellence, and several certificates of Teaching Excellence. In 2002 he was named SCHEV’s Outstanding Faculty Member for the State of Virginia. His research and academic work took him around the globe, conducting work on all seven continents.

Throughout his life and especially in his retirement, he was an avid bird watcher, and his binoculars were always nearby. He wrote a weekly nature column for many years, and he and Lois enjoyed traveling the globe, often to see and enjoy birds and nature in other

parts of the world. He enjoyed the beach, riding his bike, playing racquet sports, fishing, and loyally following the ups and downs of his much-loved Philadelphia Phillies and Philadelphia Eagles.

A celebration of life will be held at Blacksburg United Methodist Church, where he was a member, on Thursday, January 5 at 11:00am. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials to The Warm Hearth Foundation or The Michael J. Fox Foundation.

Arrangements by McCoy Funeral Home.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JAN 5. 11:00 AM (ET)

Blacksburg United Methodist Church
111 Church St SE, Blacksburg, VA 24060

Tribute Wall

NA

“ Robert and I are so very sorry to learn of the death of Jim, "Dr. Craig". He was a great MS and PhD advisor for me, but most importantly, he was a life mentor, always ready to talk family, word definitions, religion, rocks, career paths and the prospect of new babies. RIP JRC. Deepest condolences to the Craig Family.

Nora Ayuso - May 02, 2023 at 05:51 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of James Roland Craig.



January 04, 2023 at 04:29 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of James Roland Craig.



January 01, 2023 at 03:18 PM

BF

“ Love and prayers are with you Lois. You two were the kindest, smartest couple I've had the pleasure of knowing.



Bren Feutz - December 29, 2022 at 04:59 PM

MP

“ So sad to hear of Jim's passing. Jim was a very fine man. My husband Steve and I enjoyed knowing him when we lived in Blacksburg.

My deepest sympathies to his wife and family.
Marolyn Parson (Bluffton, SC)

MAROLYN PARSON - December 28, 2022 at 10:05 AM

EB

“ So sorry to hear about the death of Jim. He was a wonderful and caring person. I enjoyed working with Jim on the Planning Board of Emerald Isle. I witness his dedication and commitment to our Town. My deepest sympathies to his wife and family. May God's Blessings be with you!
Eddie Barber

Eddie Barber - December 28, 2022 at 12:21 AM

RI

Jim and Lois were a blessing to Swansboro United Methodist Church when they moved to coastal NC following Jim's retirement. They quickly made new friends and enthusiastically organized and taught a new Sunday school class. Jim loved being out on the water and diving expeditions to the Queen Anne's Revenge in Beaufort Sound. I was thankful for Jim's friendship and for fishing outings with Jim and one of his buddies, Leon Sylvester. Because of his faith and friendship, Jim made a positive impact on the lives of many—Rev. Randy Innes

Rev. Randy Innes - December 28, 2022 at 09:33 AM



Nancie, James,Lois, I'm very sorry for your loss, hope you find comfort in each other, I know when I lost my Dad, I found myself talking to him more after he was gone than when he was here, I know he was super proud of you guys, God Bless, John

John Ackerman - December 29, 2022 at 06:52 AM

LO

Lois, I know that you have just lost your best friend. I pray that you will grow even closer to God and he will lead you in the coming days. Peace and love to you and your family.
Sincerely
Lori Oliver

Lori Oliver - December 31, 2022 at 07:51 AM

CC

We are sorry to hear, from the Virginia Tech Department Of Geosciences about Jim Craig's passing away. We have good memories from our Blacksburg years. Our deepest sympathies to Lois and family.
Cahit & Dilek Coruh (Seattle, WA)

Cahit & Dilek Coruh - January 02, 2023 at 09:05 PM

MH

Lois, you know that you and Jim have always meant the world to us, and for me, that goes back to 1974. Both of you will always be our heroes as two of the most thoughtful, kind, and caring people we could ever imagine. You both changed our lives back in the early 1990's by getting us back to Virginia Tech, something that may not have happened without you two. We will always be deeply indebted. And we will always remember Jim for the monumental person he was. His memory will last with us forever, and continue to make us better. Now, more than ever, we can't wait to see you again!
Mike and Barb (Missoula, Montana)

Michael Hochella - January 03, 2023 at 12:41 PM